

IPA From EPA Region 4 to the Poarch Band of Creek Indians
EPA Region 4 – Atlanta

Geographic location or area of activity: Alabama (Poarch Band of Creek Indians)

Description of activity: Region 4 has been providing support to the Poarch Band of Creek Indians through an Interagency Personnel Agreement (IPA) since March 2005. The goal of the IPA is to provide expertise and training to the Tribe's Environmental Department, thus enhancing its growth and ability to address environmental issues. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians' Environmental Department is now being contacted on a very regular basis by other departments, Tribal leaders and Tribal businesses for advice and assistance on staying in compliance with environmental codes of the Tribe, state laws and federal regulations. There has been an increased desire by many Tribal entities to rely on environmental expertise being developed in the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Environmental Department. The Environmental Department has also been very visible because of extremely well received recycling and clean-up events and their work with the Tribal Housing Department and Health Administration on compliance issues related to housing construction and the septic tank program. Tribal leadership continues to be very supportive of the assignment which has led directly to helping the Environmental Department make major outcome related accomplishments during Fiscal year 2007.

Accomplishments over the past year include:

- Bell Creek Bridge Cleanup resulting in the removal of over 82 tons of illegally dumped garbage/waste;
- Completed first phase of the US Fish & Wildlife Service Grant "Box Turtle, Migratory Duck & Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Recovery Project on the Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve";
- Completed water turtle surveying events with the Alabama Natural Heritage Program at Auburn; field research helped complete the report "Zoological and Natural Community Surveys on the Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve";
- Published "Guide to Tribal Open Burning" fact sheet published in a Tribal newsletter and posted on the Tribal Newsletter website; completed fish tissue sampling in cooperation with the USEPA NHEERL Gulf Ecology Division on the Escambia River near a Tribal burial site in Florida;
- Continued to foster important partnerships with the Alabama Natural Heritage Program, Conecuh-Sepulga Clean Water Partnership, Alabama Department of Environment Management; Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries, Tennessee Department of Environment, Escambia County, Blackwater State Forest, Conecuh National Forest, and Escambia & Monroe County School Districts.

Interagency partners: Poarch Band of Creek Indians; Alabama Department of Environment Management; DOI-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services; Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries; Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

Local partners: Alabama Natural Heritage Program; Conecuh-Sepulga Clean Water Partnership; Escambia County; Escambia & Monroe County School Districts